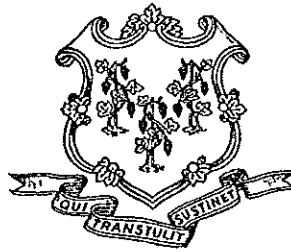


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February 13, 2013

Testimony to the Transportation Committee
SB 191 An Act Concerning The Penalty For Causing Harm To A Vulnerable User Of A
Public Way

Senator Maynard, Representative Guerrera, and members of the Transportation Committee:

My name is Beth Bye, State Senator for the 5th district, representing West Hartford, Farmington, Burlington, and Bloomfield.

I come to you today, first to thank you for adding Senate Bill 191 to today's agenda, and also to voice my strong support for this bill. Last session, this committee reported favorable on this same bill. It also passed the Judiciary Committee and the Senate, before stalling on the House calendar. I am hopeful that this year will be different, and we will provide pedestrians, cyclists, and especially individuals with disabilities these small protections.

While most modern roads in the US and abroad are built with multi-modal traffic in mind, most roads in Connecticut are not well equipped to handle pedestrian and other types of traffic. Yet, all individuals have and deserve the right to use our roads safely, regardless of the mode of transportation they utilize. This bill recognizes that each user of a road is deserving of protection from aggressive, dangerous, or negligent driving. The penalties in this bill are not severe, but they are enough that they will serve to educate drivers who are not cautious in constantly surveying their surroundings.

Whether they're in wheelchairs, walking, cycling, skating, or working, non-vehicle users of our roads are increasing. I believe the law needs to account for this increase with an increased penalty. Specifically, I am happy to support this bill on behalf of advocates, particularly for the disabled, who believe this bill will raise awareness to the fact that being a pedestrian on the side of a roadway, especially on these narrow, snow-blocked roads, is oftentimes discomfoting, and sometimes dangerous. I believe this bill will raise awareness to the fact that public roads are not just for cars anymore, and I appreciate the committee's support.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak on behalf of this important bill and I am open to any questions the committee might have.

Thank you.